

economic engines in the world, Intel. Sergey Brin, another innovative Jewish leader, came to America with his family to escape anti-Semitism. Through hard work and diligent studies, he founded one of the most innovative companies in the world: Google.

Examples abound of other Jewish Americans who lead our community in innovation and philanthropy, including Jeffrey Skoll, Ken Levy, Eli Reinhard and Eic Benhamou. America's ethnic diversity is a source of our country's strength, and the Jewish American community stands as a bedrock for our nation.

#### IN SUPPORT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

#### HON. JOHN J.H. "JOE" SCHWARZ

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, May 22, 2006*

Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in support of President Bush's proclamation declaring May 2006 as Jewish American Heritage Month.

Jewish American Heritage Month recognized the wonderful cultural heritage of the Jewish people in America. It will be a time to honor all of the benefits and successes that Jewish Americans have experienced as well as recognizing the achievements and the diversity their culture has provided to the United States.

Jewish American Heritage Month will also provide a venue for education of the Jewish American culture. It allows an opportunity to further educate and ultimately end anti-Semitism for future generations.

Today, I join my colleagues as well as President Bush to establish the month of May to observe and celebrate the rich history of the Jewish people in America and honor the great contributions they have made to our country.

#### TRIBUTE TO DISABLED VETERANS

#### HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, May 22, 2006*

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, next Monday we will honor all that have made the ultimate sacrifice serving and protecting our country. I rise today to honor our disabled veterans still with us that have sacrificed so much.

On the last Monday of May every year, Members of this body celebrate Memorial Day by walking in parades, making speeches, and talking to active and retired military men and women. We tell them how much we appreciate their efforts and thank them for their services. We do this proudly as they deserve our respect and admiration for serving this great country.

Currently, American troops defend our freedom on many different fronts and veterans are at the forefront of our legislative priorities. The number of veterans coming home from Iraq, Afghanistan, and other areas increases daily and it is our responsibility to ensure their needs are met. While our veterans may be out of harm's way, our responsibility to them remains.

I am introducing legislation to further our commitment to our disabled veterans that have served our country with valor. Currently, every year Congress enacts a cost-of-living adjustment for veterans' disability benefits. We have done this every year since 1978. In fact, both Congress and the President assume this COLA will be enacted every year.

My legislation, the Veterans Disability Compensation Automatic COLA Act, would simply make the COLAs for veterans' disability benefits automatic each year. Veterans should not have to depend on Congress adjusting their disability benefits every year. Social Security and Medicare have automatic COLA adjustments. Our veterans deserve to have that same security. Furthermore, because Congress and the President assume this increase in their budget every year, my bill has no budgetary effect.

I am also pleased to enter into the RECORD letters of support from the Disabled American Veterans as well as American Veterans (AMVETS). These veterans service organizations support this bill to assure veterans the COLA they deserve.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot and should not assume future Congresses will act to adjust veterans' disability COLAs every year. I ask my colleagues to join me to ensure our veterans get the benefits they deserve without having to rely on a superfluous yearly act by Congress.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS,  
*Washington, DC, May 22, 2006.*

Hon. JOE KNOLLENBERG,  
*House of Representatives,*  
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE KNOLLENBERG: On behalf of the 1.5 million members of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and its Auxiliary, I write in support of the measure you are introducing today, the Veterans' Disability Compensation Automatic COLA Act.

Your bill would protect the benefits of sick and disabled veterans and their dependents by preserving its intent and beneficial purpose. Specifically, the bill would automatically increase the rates of disability compensation, dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC), and the annual clothing allowance by the percentage of increase in the cost of living as measured by the Consumer Price Index without precluding any other increases deemed necessary in the future.

Other benefits such as automobile and housing grants, and burial and plot allowances, for which Congress has regularly enacted legislation to adjust these benefits have had their value seriously eroded. Unless the amounts of disability compensation, DIC, and clothing allowance are periodically adjusted, inflation diminishes the significance and effectiveness of these benefits.

Again, I want to thank you for your continued effort to protect and enhance the benefits and services of veterans who are disabled by virtue of their selfless sacrifice and service to our nation, and their dependents.

Sincerely,

JOSEPH A. VIOLANTE,  
*National Legislative Director.*

AMVETS,  
*Lanham, MD, May 22, 2006.*

Hon. JOE KNOLLENBERG,  
*House of Representatives,*  
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE KNOLLENBERG: On behalf of AMVETS (American Veterans), I want to thank you for your legislation that will provide a timely and guaranteed cost-of-living adjustment for our nation's disabled veterans.

AMVETS endorses your legislation to automatically increase veterans' disability benefits by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) each year, without an act of Congress. It is important VA benefits keep pace with society and the cost of living. Your bill will see that veterans' benefits are increased proportionately and will sustain the same buying power as in previous years.

AMVETS supports our nation's commitment to care for the men and women who have served in our military service. I strongly encourage the House Veterans' Affairs Committee to act favorably on this legislation.

Sincerely,

JAMES B. KING,  
*National Executive Director.*

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, May 22, 2006*

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, May 19, 2006, I was absent for votes as I was honored to give the commencement address to the 2006 graduating class at Monroe Academy in Monroeville, Alabama. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcalls 173, 174, and 176. I would have voted "nay" on rollcall 175.

#### TRIBUTE TO "WE THE PEOPLE" AND EAST KENTWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

#### HON. VERNON J. EHLERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, May 22, 2006*

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the "We the People" program. From April 29 to May 1, 2006, approximately 1,200 students from across the country participated in the national finals competition of We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution, the most extensive educational program in the country developed specifically to educate young people about the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights. I am pleased to announce that East Kentwood High School from Kentwood, Michigan, received the Unit 3 Award in the competition. The "We the People" program is administered by the Center for Civic Education and funded by the U.S. Department of Education by act of Congress.

The "We the People" national finals is a 3-day academic competition that simulates a congressional hearing in which the students "testify" before a panel of judges on constitutional topics. Students demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of constitutional principles as they evaluate, take, and defend positions on relevant historical and contemporary issues. Among the questions students responded to in this year's competition were: "How would you distinguish a federal system from a unitary government and from a confederation?" and "What did the Framers hope to achieve by establishing a federal system of government?"

The following outstanding students represented East Kentwood High School: Mark Alonso, Sefik Arapovic, Tyler Boyd, Michelle